

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SANAA 01988 091349Z

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USINT ALGIERS IMMEDIATE

USINT CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

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S E C R E T SANAA 1988

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1. ACCORDING FINAL PARA REFTTEL, AND NEWS BROADCASTS, USG IN SECURITY COUNCIL PRESSING FOR FIRM LINKAGE BETWEEN CEASEFIRE AND RETURN TO STATUS QUO ANTE. I HOPE WE NOT SO COMMITTED TO THIS PATH THAT RE-EXAMINATION WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE IN THE LIGHT OF UNFOLDING DEVELOPMENTS.

2. FROM SANAA'S VERY REMOTE VANTAGE, WE HARDLY IN POSITION KNOW OR EVALUATE ALL FACTORS THAT HAVE GONE INTO USG CALCULATION. HOWEVER CERTAIN ELEMENTS IN THE EQUATION STRIKE US:

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 SANAA 01988 091349Z

A. SINCE IN 1967 WE OBTAINED A CEASEFIRE RESOLUTION AFTER THE ISRAELIS HAD ACQUIRED LARGE AMOUNTS OF ARAB TERRITORY, AND A LESS THAN IRONCLAD RESOLUTION ON NON-ACQUISITION OF TERRITORY BY FORCE ONLY SOME MONTHS LATER, ARABS WILL CONSIDER OUR INSISTENCE ON FULL LINKAGE, NOW THAT THEY HAVE RE-ACQUIRED MINUTE SLICE OF LOST TERRITORY, AN INCONSISTENT, PARTISAN ACT FAVORING THE ISRAELIS.

B. IN THE EVENT, LINKAGE LIKELY PROVE QUITE UNNECESSARY SINCE BY THE TIME SC ACTS ISRAEL PROBABLY WILL EITHER HAVE MOVED BACK TO CEASEFIRE LINE OR BEYOND. IF ISRAEL HAS NOT, IT WILL IGNORE THE RESOLUTION UNTIL IT HAS, AS HAPPENED IN 1967 VIS-A-VIS SYRIA.

C. IN ITS POST-HOSTILITIES PURSUIT OF MEANINGFUL PEACE NEGOTIATIONS, USG WILL BE LESS EFFECTIVE IF ARABS FEEL WE WERE BIASED IN OUR DIPLOMATIC APPROACH IN UN. ARABS WILL ALSO CHARGE US WITH INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN 1967 AND 1973, USING THIS TO CLAIM THAT IF IN 1973 WE INSIST ON RETURN TO CEASEFIRE LINES WE SHOULD DO AS WELL IN REGARD TO PRE-1967 ARMISTICE LINES.

D. PRESENT WAR IS CERTAIN TO RESULT IN ESCALATED ARAB PRESSURES THROUGH OIL. IF WE CAN SHOW ARAB MODERATES, PRINCIPALLY SAUDI ARABIA AND GULF STATES, THAT WE HAVE BEEN CONSISTENT AND EVENHANDED, PROBABLY THIS CAN BE KEPT WITHIN NEGOTIABLE BOUNDS. IF WE ARE OPEN TO CHARGE OF HAVING FOUGHT ISRAEL'S DIPLOMATIC FIGHT, MODERATE ARABS MIGHT FIND IT FAR MORE DIFFICULT AVOID FOLLOWING THE EXTREMISTS IN THE DIRECTION OF DRASTIC PRICE AND PARTICIPATION DEMANDS, CURTAILMENT OF PRODUCTION INCREASES AND PERHAPS EVEN NATIONALIZATION AND SELECTIVE BOYCOTTS.

3. WHAT OUR THOUGHT BOILS DOWN TO IS THAT USG NEED NOT FOREGO AN INITIAL EFFORT TO LINK FULLY THE CALL FOR CEASEFIRE WITH A RETURN TO TERRITORIAL STATUS QUO ANTE. HOWEVER, IT MAY NOT BE WISE TO INSIST TOO MUCH IF SC DEVELOPS A CONSENSUS THAT CEASEFIRE IS THE PRIORITY AND
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 SANAA 01988 091349Z

THAT LINKAGE TO RESTORATION OF STATUS QUO ANTE NEED NOT BE AIRTIGHT IN LANGUAGE OF RESOLUTION. IF WE INSIST THAT IT MUST BE, POSSIBLE INFLUENCE OF USG ON FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS MIGHT BE CORRESPONDINGLY REDUCED, PERHAPS TO DETRIMENT OF OUR OWN INTERESTS AS WELL AS PROSPECTS FOR PEACE FOLLOWING HOSTILITIES.

4. WE REALIZE ABOVE TACTICS ARE NOT WITHOUT RISK.

SHOULD USG DE-EMPHASIS OF RETURN TO
TERRITORIAL STATUS QUO ANTE COINCIDE WITH ISRAELI
ADVANCE ACROSS 1967 CEASEFIRE LINES, WE COULD EXPOSE
OURSELVES TO ARAB CHARGE THAT WE HAD LOST INTEREST IN
WITHDRAWAL BECAUSE ISRAELIS WINNING. WITH THIS CONSID-
ERATION IN MIND, PERHAPS WE SHOULD WORK TOWARDS RESOLU-
TION WHICH PLACES PRIMARY OPERATIVE STRESS ON CEASEFIRE
BUT RETAINS CALL FOR WITHDRAWAL TO STATUS QUO ANTE AS
STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE.
CRAWFORD

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